

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8948

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 6369

DEPT PASS FAA, USDOC

CASABLANCA FOR RCAA

LAGOS FOR FAA

E.O. 11652: GDS 12/31/82

TAGS: EAID, EAIR, CG

SUBJECT: PROBABLE GOZ REQUEST FOR FAA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

1. SUMMARY: THE GOZ WILL PROBABLY SOON REQUEST HELP FROM THE U.S. FEDERAL AVIATION AGENCY (FAA) IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THAT ORGANIZATION'S ZAIRIAN COUNTERPART, THE REGIE DES VOIES AERIENNES (RVA). SERVICE BY RVA HAS DETERIORATED RAPIDLY SINCE THE FAA'S JUNE 1975 DEPARTURE AND MAY JEOPARDIZE CONTINUED SAFE OPERATION OF CIVIL AVIATION IN ZAIRE. GIVEN THE UNITED STATES' TRADITIONAL ASSOCIATION WITH ZAIRE'S AVIATION SECTOR AND OUR DESIRE TO HELP ZAIRE IN AREAS WHERE IT LACKS THE NECESSARY EXPERTISE, MISSION RECOMMENDS THE USG PREPARE TO RESPOND FAVORABLY AND RAPIDLY TO EXPECTED GOZ REQUEST FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BY FAA. END SUMMARY.

2. THE EMBASSY EXPECTS THE GOZ TO REQUEST FORMALLY THE RETURN OF THE FAA TO ZAIRE IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO TAKE OVER ADMINIS-
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TRATION OF THE RVA. TRANSPORT MINISTER D'ZBO HAS INDICATED

TO AIR ZAIRE'S AMCIT DELEGATE GENERAL, JOSEPH GATT, AND TO DANIEL MOORE, FORMER HEAD OF FAA'S TEAM IN ZAIRE, NOW HEAD OF FAA'S EUROPE, AFRICA, MIDDLE EAST AND LATIN AMERICA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, AND CURRENTLY IN KINSHASA ON VACATION, THAT HE INTENDS TO FIRE RVA'S CURRENT DELEGATE GENERAL, BOLUKA, AND REORGANIZE ITS OPERATIONS. PRESIDENT MOBUTU HAS INDICATED TO D'ZBO HIS DISPLEASURE AT THE RVA'S CURRENT OPERATIONS AND D'ZBO WANTS THE AMERICANS BACK AND, IN PARTICULAR, DAN MOORE RESTORED TO HIS FORMER POSITION AS HEAD OF THE RVA. MOORE'S OWN OBSERVATIONS AND GATT'S EXPERIENCES LEAVE LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE DETERIORATION OF THE RVA, UNLESS HALTED, WILL POSE SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR THE CONTINUATION OF CIVIL AVIATION IN ZAIRE AND THE SAFE OPERATION OF AIR ZAIRE'S EXIM-FINANCED FLEET.

3. MOORE FEELS THAT RVA'S ADMINISTRATION OF ZAIRE'S AIRPORTS AND CIVIL AVIATION CAN BE PUT BACK IN ORDER WITH THE AID OF AN FAA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TEAM. PRELIMINARY SOUNDINGS INDICATE THAT A MAXIMUM TEAM OF FIVE FAA EMPLOYEES COULD PROVIDE THE CORE FOR REORGANIZATION OF THE RVA. MOORE WOULD ALSO URGE REDUCTIONS IN BOTH RVA'S WORK FORCE AND THE NUMBER OF AIRPORTS RVA MAINTAINS.

4. SHOULD THE USG DECIDE TO REACT FAVORABLY TO THE UPCOMING GOZ REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE IN THIS CRITICAL AREA, AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE RESHAPING OF THE RVA SHOULD BE PREPARED AND SUBMITTED TO D'ZBO. THIS STUDY SHOULD SHOW FINANCIAL GAINS FROM THE CUTBACKS IN PERSONNEL AND COVERAGE AS WELL AS IMPROVED FISCAL CONTROL WHICH WOULD RECOVER THE TEAM'S COST; ALSO THERE MAY BE POSSIBILITIES OF SELLING AS SURPLUS PART OF RVA'S HUGE INVENTORY OF UNUSED NAVIGATION EQUIPMENT WHICH WOULD MORE THAN SATISFY THE FOREIGN EXCHANGE COST OF MAINTAINING THE TEAM -- ESTIMATED AT AROUND \$600,000 PER YEAR FOR A FIVE-MAN TEAM. WE ALSO FEEL IT IS FEASIBLE TO FINANCE THE FAA SERVICES AS PART OF AID'S PROPOSED CIP LOAN IN FY77.

5. THE RETURN OF AN FAA TEAM TO ZAIRE IS IN LINE WITH OUR GENERAL POLICY OF HELPING ZAIRE IN CRITICAL AREAS WHERE IT LACKS NECESSARY EXPERTISE. THE DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT THE FAA FIRST CAME TO ZAIRE WITH AID FUNDING AND AFTER TWO YEARS

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THE GOZ AGREED TO TAKE OVER FUNDING. SIX MONTHS LATER, FAA ADVISORY TEAM SERVICES WERE PREMATURELY AND ABRUPTLY TERMINATED IN JUNE 1975 AS A RESULT OF THE GOZ'S SEVERE FINANCIAL CRISIS AND POLITICAL TENSIONS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND ZAIRE. SINCE THEN, DETERIORATION IN CIVIL AVIATION CAPABILITY AND AN UPSWING IN US-GOZ RELATIONS HAVE CHANGED THE SITUATION AND ARGUE IN FAVOR OF A RESUMPTION OF THIS PROGRAM. THE U.S. HAS ENJOYED A LONG, PROFITABLE ASSOCIATION WITH ZAIRE'S

AVIATION SECTOR; ZAIRE HAS CHOSEN PREDOMINANTLY US-BUILT FLEETS BOTH FOR ITS AIRLINE AND ITS AIR FORCE. THE IMPORTANCE OF AVIATION TO ZAIRE MAKES THE RETURN OF THE FAA COMPELLING FOR POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL REASONS. MISSION RECOMMENDS THAT THE U.S. PREPARE TO RESPOND QUICKLY AND POSITVELY IF, AS WE EXPECT, GOZ CONVEYS FORMAL REQUEST FOR FAA HELP.
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